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ABSTRACT

This report is concerned with the responsibilities of professors for teacher training. The quality of high school and post high school business teaching depends upon attitudes toward and understandings of business and the economic system which have been developed in the business courses on the college level. The paper briefly examines the disadvantages of retaining the same learned approaches and techniques from college courses and offers recommendations in regard to the improvement of instructional techniques on the college level. (JB)

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# Professors as TEACHER TRAINERS

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## FOREWORD

This is an inaugural issue of a publication whose sponsors hope will make a difference. The Monograph Series provides career educators an additional opportunity to share their ideas with the profession. We seek original, previously unpublished ideas, be they the results of intensive research and/or intensive personal reflection, which a jury may decide warrants wide dissemination. We simply do not wish to see good ideas die for want of a forum. Author's are encouraged to submit in accordance with the brief and simple directions on the back cover.

It is fitting to launch this series with the work of a professor who will retire in June 1975 after 39 rewarding years of service to education.

Professor Stutsman is concerned with the effect that college professors have upon the methodology that their students will employ when they become teachers. In pursuit of this theme, Professor Stutsmen shares his credo about those special responsibilities of college professors who have prospective teachers in their classes. While the statement targets specifically upon instruction in such business administration courses as management, marketing and accounting, the issue is certainly generalizable and provides considerable food for thought for teachers on the college level.

Jerry Streichler
For the Monograph Committee

# PROFESSORS AS TEACHER-TRAINERS

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Many college professors would vigorously deny that they have any direct responsibility for the preparation of teachers. This attitude is certainly prevalent among professors in colleges of business administration. Their interest and attention is slanted toward preparation of top level executives, accountants, economists, and specialists in advertising, transportation, management, personnel, statistics, etc.,--and generally with the emphasis on large corporations. But, preparing teachers of business at any level? How ridiculous!

## High School Business Teaching

A large percentage of young people in the United States terminate their formal education at the high school level. At the high school level the business-education teachers are the ones charged with introducing pupils to the various fields of business knowledge found in colleges of business administration:

| | |
|---|---|
| Economics | Consumer Economics |
| Business Law | Data Processing |
| Sales-Merchandising | Business English |
| General Business | Business Organization |
| Business Mathematics | |

Upon the quality of their teaching will depend the attitudes toward and understandings of business and of our economic system possessed by a large proportion of our citizenry.

Where do high school business teachers get their own attitudes and understandings of business and economics which they will be passing on to

their pupils? Where do they get their ideas for teaching these subjects? To a large extent they develop them in the classes of professors in colleges of business administration!

Post High School Business Teaching

Beyond the high school level, we find teachers of business in the vocational and technical schools, in community colleges, in junior colleges, in extension and adult education programs, and as graduate students teaching one or more classes in a college of business administration while working on advanced degrees. At all of these levels, we find individuals teaching various of the business administration subjects--usually with little or no formal preparation for the complex skill of teaching. Where do they learn how to teach? They have to operate on the basis of their own most recent exposure to teaching; namely, observing their professors in business administration classes.

Are B. A. Professors Good Models?

The statement is frequently heard that teachers tend to teach in the same manner in which they were taught. It is generally true that many high school and post secondary teachers attempt to carry over into their classes in business the same approach and techniques which they were exposed to by their college professors in the business administration subjects. Aping their college teachers may be disastrous at the lower academic levels for a number of reasons:

1. College classes are made up of individuals who are not only more mature chronologically, but are also a highly select group compared with the usual high school student body. The traditional lecture method favored by college professors with its high premium on verbalization of complex abstractions

is quite ineffective with the majority of high school students (and with quite a few college students also!).

2. Most college professors have had no professional preparation in how to teach--operating on the traditional liberal arts philosophy that "If you know your subject, you can teach it." While no one could seriously question the need for knowledge of his field by one who is going to teach it to others, it is oversimplifying the profession of teaching to maintain that knowledge of the subject is all that is needed.

3. Professors of business administration are interested in the theoretical aspects of their areas with a view of training professionals to function in these areas. It is left up to the future high school and post-secondary teachers to figure out for themselves how to digest and interpret such knowledge in a form that will have meaning and application for their students. This they are frequently unable to do or do very poorly. Is this their fault? Not entirely.

4. Many professors of business administration seem to feel that unless they make their subjects as complex and "tough" as possible, they will not achieve the dignity of college level teaching. This appears to be an unfortunate attitude and the very opposite one to that which the professor should have. His job is to help his students to learn and to understand the subject, not to overwhelm them with the difficulties of the subject or his own erudition.

5. Many college students complain about the attitude of many professors toward counseling with students and offering help outside of class time. Many professors take the cavalier position that "I lecture in class, and I make outside assignments. If you can't understand the material, that's your tough luck." Students frequently complain that they can't find their professors outside of class hours, and that when they can, the professors act like it

is an imposition to be asked for any extra help. Is this the attitude of a good teacher?

Unfortunate By-products

Most business-teacher educators are aware of the dilemma which faces business education in the secondary and post-secondary school. On the one hand, there is the criticism by business leaders, politicians, and others that our graduates are woefully lacking in a basic knowledge of our economic system; how business is organized and how it operates; and how to choose and use intelligently the myriad goods and services that are available to consumers. Much of this preparation normally belongs in the business departments of our secondary/post-secondary schools.

On the other hand, we have business teacher trainees dreading to be assigned to teach basic business subjects because they were never really able to understand such subjects in their college classes; and, because they couldn't understand the material as presented by their professors, they felt constantly frustrated. These were not inferior students who were incapable of understanding regardless of how the subjects were taught. Many of these students received A's and B's in their courses. They learned how to memorize the book and hand it back on examinations without ever understanding what the subject was all about!

Just as many young people very early form a violent distaste for mathematics through unskillful teaching at the elementary level, so do many of the students in business administration form a dislike for the basic business subjects which they take in college. Much of this dislike, is quite probably the result of poor teaching by professors in business administration.

Possible Remedies

While obviously there are no simple solutions to problems as large as those described above, a few recommendations may be worthy of consideration by those who are genuinely interested in improving the effectiveness of their college teaching.

1. Just as all truly great teachers throughout history have made their messages so simple that even a child could understand them, I believe that B. A. professors can do a better job of predigesting their subject matter before presenting it to their classes--especially in the introductory courses.

2. Professors should examine their attitudes toward teaching and students to see if they are genuinely concerned with helping those in their classes not only to understand but to develop a real interest in the subject that will last beyond the end of the course. If such an attitude is lacking and can't be developed, then the professor is doing young people a grave injustice by continuing to teach.

3. While college professors could profit from good education courses in how to teach, it will probably be quite some time before such a course becomes a part of the professional requirements for college teaching. A practicable suggestion may be to have a department on the campus, such as business education, to develop a concentrated course or seminars on the key aspects of good teaching to be made available on some basis to interested faculty and part-time instructors. Many colleges of business administration offer various opportunities to their staffs to upgrade their knowledge in various areas such as mathematics and use of computers--why not one on how to improve effectiveness of teaching?

4. Professors obviously vary in their effectiveness as teachers and some will have more aptitude for one level of college work than for another. Deans

of business administration should know rather well who are the most effective professors with undergraduates, who with upperclass and graduate students, and who should confine their work largely to research work and not teach classes at all. In other words, deans of colleges have a responsibility to see that students in business administration classes receive the quality of instruction which they have a right to expect. Assigning most lower level classes to graduate students is a questionable practice.

5. Whether they like the idea or not, professors should realize that for the future teachers in their classes, the way in which the class is conducted will greatly influence the ideas of those future teachers on how the subject should be taught when they become teachers. This puts a very real responsibility on the professor to do as "model" a job in his classes as he possibly can. To a considerable extent he is a "methods" teacher whether he wants to be or not and must share in the criticism of poor teaching in his area at the lower academic levels.

The Career and Technology Education Monograph Series is simply a vehicle for preserving and sharing ideas. Each monograph will deal with one topic and may vary extensively in length and subject matter from monograph to monograph. Only those manuscripts judged acceptable by the monograph committee will be published. Manuscripts should be submitted in duplicate (original plus one copy) and preferably prepared according to the American Psychological Association Publication Manual specifications. Anyone is eligible to submit manuscripts. If found unacceptable, the original manuscript will be returned. Manuscripts should be submitted to:

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